

Week of March 18, 2002: MDOT FLASH FACTS
TOPIC: Winter Driving

Many factors contribute to safe driving in the winter. Are you and your vehicle ready for the road conditions?

- Make sure all ice, snow and fog are cleared from all windows and lights
- Check road conditions as you begin to drive
- Don't get a false sense of security with 4-wheel drive and SUVs -- they brake the same as regular cars
- Increase your following distance
- Watch out for pedestrians walking in the street, kids sliding on snow banks and plows

Other pointers:

- Check WGME 13 for cancellations and road condition information
- Take curves and downhill stretches slowly
- Passing a vehicle can be especially risky. Remember the road ahead of a plow may not be sanded or plowed yet.
- Bridges freeze first -- remember cold air is beneath the road surface.
- Shady areas may be icy though other road sections are clear and dry.
- Watch for icy spots on cold nights following warm days.
- Clean head and taillights regularly so you can see and be seen, especially during storm and melting periods. Keep rags or paper towels available. You can also use the windshield squeegee provided at most service stations -- use it on all windows and lights every time you fill up.
- Keep your windshield washer dispenser filled, and make sure the wipers work well,
- Pump your brakes if you have regular brakes, but depress the brake pedal completely and hold if you have anti-lock brakes (ABS). The chattering is normal for ABS brakes.